

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 AGR-10 COME-00 SP-02 AID-05

NSC-05 RSC-01 CIEP-02 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9118

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, EAGR, CS

SUBJ: 1975 MEAT IMPORT PROGRAM

REF: STATE 009133

1. RESPONSES IN REFTEL VERY MUCH APPRECIATED.

2. EMBASSY UNCLEAR ON HOW CALCULATIONS IN PARA 1 WERE MADE THAT INDICATED THAT COSTA RICA'S VRS LEVEL WOULD BE RAISED BY ONLY 0.5 MILLION POUNDS BY SHIFTING BASE TO CY 1972-74. WE CALCULATE COSTA RICA'S CY 1972-74 SHARE OF U.S. IMPORTS TO BE 4.2 PERCENT (INCLUDING 1974 ESTIMATE OF 5.3 PERCENT) AND THIS YIELDS FIGURE OF 48.3 MILLION POUNDS, OR IMPROVEMENT OF 5.1 MILLION POUNDS OVER DEPARTMENT'S CALCULATIONS. WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR DATA VIA POUCH. INCLUSION OF FULL YEAR 1974 DATA COULD BE ARGUED ON BASIS THAT IT IS LATEST AVAILABLE DATA AND IT INDICATES SUPPLIER'S WILLINGNESS TO SELL TO U.S. UNDER ADVERSE PRICE CONDITIONS. EXCLUSION OF 1972 FROM BASE PERIOD MIGHT ALSO BE ARGUED AS THIS WAS YEAR OF PARTIAL QUOTA, UNCLASSIFIED

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AND ALSO A YEAR WHEN THIS REGION SUFFERED

EFFECTS OF DROUGHT. IF CY 1973-74 BASE USED, WE CALCULATE THAT COSTA RICA'S SHARE WOULD BE 4.4 PERCENT AND THAT VRS WOULD BE 50.6 MILLION POUNDS. IF IMPORT ESTIMATE RAISED TO TRIGGER LEVEL MINUS ONE, COSTA RICA'S VOLUME WOULD BECOME 51.9 MILLION POUNDS ON BASIS OF OUR DATA.

3. SEVERAL MEAT PACKERS WHO KNOW CENTRAL AMERICAN MEAT SITUATION WELL CLAIM THAT PROPOSED VRS LEVEL FOR COSTA RICA UNFAIR VIS-A-VIS OTHER COUNTRIES OF REGION. THEY CLAIM COSTA RICA WOULD BE ONLY COUNTRY FORCED TO CUT EXPORTS WHILE MOST OTHERS WOULD BE UNABLE TO REACH THEIR VRS LEVELS. IN PARTICULAR, THEY CITE GUATEMALA, HONDURAS AND NICARAGUA AS COUNTRIES THAT WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO REACH PROPOSED VRS LEVELS. IF TRUE, THIS WOULD BE BASIS FOR SEEKING ALTERNATIVE BASE PERIOD.

4. EMBASSY WONDERES WHAT DEPARTMENT'S RATIONALE IS FOR PROPOSING TO GRANT IRELAND 3 PERCENT SHARE UNDER VOLUNTARY RESTRAINT PROGRAM. THE EEC, OF WHICH IRELAND IS NOW A MEMBER, HAS INTENSIFIED U.S. MEAT PROBLEM BY CLOSING ITS BORDERS TO THIRD COUNTRY MEAT IMPORTS. THIS RAISES QUESTION OF WHY AN EEC MEMBER SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO ENJOY AN IMPORT ALLOCATION UNDER U.S. PROGRAM WHEN EEC EXCLUDES ALL MEAT IMPORTS. ALSO, IN TERMS OF EQUITY, EEC PROHIBITION ON MEAT IMPORTS FROM THIRD COUNTRIES SHOULD INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEAT SALES WITHIN EEC BY MEMBER COUNTRIES INCLUDING IRELAND. IF IRISH VRS ALLOTMENT OR A PORTION OF IT COULD BE REALLOCATED AMONG LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES (AS CLOSEST SUPPLIERS WHOSE LOWER DELIVERY COSTS MAKE THEM MORE ABLE TO CONTINUE TO SUPPLY MEAT DURING CURRENT LOW PRICE PERIOD) IT COULD BE AN ADDITIONAL MOVE TO HELP

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REDUCE ADVERSE IMPACT OF MEAT PROGRAM

5. SEVERAL MEMBERS OF GOCR COMMISSION APPOINTED TO STUDY VRS HAVE ASKED EMBASSY WHEN SCCN MEETING WILL BE RECONVENED. THEY ARE THINKING ABOUT SENDING A SPECIAL DELEGATION TO WASHINGTON FIRST WEEK OF FEBRUARY TO ARGUE COSTA RICA'S CASE BEFORE DEPARTMENT AND USDA AND

WOULD LIKE THIS VISIT TO PRECEDE SCCN MEETING BY A
WEEK OR SO.
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